

SARL NEWS SUNDAY 15 DECEMBER 2013

You are listening to ZS6SRL, the official radio station of the South African Radio League, the national body for amateur radio in South Africa. The SARL broadcasts a news bulletin every Sunday at 08:15 CAT in Afrikaans and at 08:30 CAT in English. To listen to a web stream, visit www.sarl.org.za, click on 'Amateur Radio Today' and follow the links for details. For audio via Echolink, connect to ZS0JPL-R.

You can download this bulletin and previous ones from www.sarl.org.za and also subscribe there to receive future bulletins by e-mail.

SILENT KEY

From the North West Amateur Radio Club it is reported that Flip Fourie, ZS6FF, of Orkney passed away on Wednesday, 11 Dec 2013. We convey our sympathy to his wife, family and friends.

(Silence)

Your newsreader this morning is (name and call sign), on 145,725 MHz from Pretoria, with a relay on 7,066 MHz SSB. (Other news readers change to suit).

IN THE NEWS TODAY:

MADIBA WE SALUTE YOU THE SHORT-PATH SUMMER SOLSTICE PROPAGATION (SSSP) STUDIES OF IONOGRAMS SHOW SUPREMACY OF THE 5 MHZ BAND

You are listening to ZS6SRL. Stay tuned for more details on these and other important and interesting items.

MADIBA WE SALUTE YOU

Today is indeed a sad day as ex-President Nelson Mandela is laid to rest.

The South African Radio League, its council and members join the world in mourning the loss of South Africa's greatest statesman, Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela. Let us continue to remember and be encouraged by the so many positive things for which he stood. While we mourn his passing, we celebrate his life and the lessons he taught us and the world.

The SARL will be operating special event stations from around South Africa using the call sign ZS9MADIBA. Members of the SARL are invited to apply for time slots to operate ZS9MADIBA from their own shacks. QSLing is via the bureau or by sending your QSL to SARL, P O Box 1721, Strubensvallei 1735, South Africa. You may also use Logbook of the World. To receive the special QSL card by mail, include \$1 for postage and Self-addressed envelope. For more info, an operators schedule and to book a time slot visit www.sarl.org.za

The special event stations will read out the following as and when appropriate "ZS9MADIBA is the South African Radio League Special Event Station commemorating the life and recent passing of Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, elder

statesman and first democratically-elected President of the Republic of South Africa. Affectionately referred to as "Madiba", he became one of the most recognised leaders in the world and was instrumental in the peaceful transition of South Africa from minority rule to a constitutional democracy. South Africans join the people of the world in mourning his passing and celebrating his legacy."

Farewell Madiba, may we never forget.

(Minute of silence)

Your are tuned to SARL News

112 YEARS AGO

On 12 December 1901 Guglielmo Marconi received the first transatlantic radio signal (the letter "S" in Morse Code), at Signal Hill in St John's, Newfoundland.

THE SHORT-PATH SUMMER SOLSTICE PROPAGATION (SSSP)

In June 1999, around the equinox in the Northern Hemisphere, a Japanese radio amateur, Han Higasa, JE1BMJ, heard a European TV station on 48,250 MHz. He immediately gave a CQ call on 50,110 MHz, and to his surprise Toivo, OH7PI, came back to him and they had the first-ever QSO on this unexpected mode on 50 MHz. Since then every year around equinox time many QSO's have been made between Japan and Europe, and eventually extended to North America.

Han, JE1BMJ, suggested that amateurs in the southern hemisphere should also look out for SSSP during their summer solstice in December. Since 2009 Australian and New Zealand amateurs have logged many South American stations on 50 MHz SSSP too. These SSSP openings in the southern hemisphere occurred between 8 December and 12 January, but not every day.

To explore the possibility of SSSP propagation between Australia and South Africa, ZS2FM ran CW tests around our December 2010 equinox with amateurs in Perth, Western Australia. Unfortunately they did not receive anything, but a report came from Frank, VK7DX, at Hobart in Tasmania, that he saw traces of a signal on the WSJT waterfall, on the correct frequency, the right time and in the direction of South Africa, but he could not identify the call sign. Maybe some keen amateurs on our east coast could pick up the baton and transmit some signals on 50,110 MHz to VK in the mornings around this equinox period and see what happens.

STUDIES OF IONOGRAMS SHOW SUPREMACY OF THE 5 MHZ BAND

The ionograms generated by the South African ionosonde network clearly illustrate the supremacy of the 5 MHz band for short range, near vertical incidence skywave (NVIS) communications under certain conditions. These typically happens during the morning and late afternoon when the 7 MHz band does not support short range, sky wave communications and the 3.5 and 1.8 MHz bands suffer from high noise levels.

During the middle of the day the 7 MHz (and 10 MHz during high solar activity) band is typically the most effective medium for short range, sky wave communications. Permanent access to the 5 MHz band will ensure that the amateur radio community can efficiently contribute to emergencies requiring short distance communications beyond line-of-sight as typically required in hilly and mountainous terrain.

The South African ionosonde network is unique in Africa and place South African radio amateurs in the very fortunate position to monitor reigning, short range propagation conditions and to improve their skills and experience accordingly.

An article by Hannes Coetzee illustrated with ionograms is available for download on the SARL 5 MHz propagation Research page. Follow the link from the SARL home page.

ANOTHER REMINDER THAT ENTRIES IN THE VIDEO COMPETITION WILL CLOSE SOON

The South African Amateur Radio Development Trust invites amateur videographers to take part in a video competition and compete for some great prizes. Be creative with your camera or even your smartphone. Shoot a short video of an exciting Amateur Radio activity in South Africa and you could win a 5watt CW MFJ 40 metre transceiver kit valued at R1300 as well as one of many other prizes. The video format can be AVI, WMV or MPEG with a minimum resolution of 320 X 240. The length of the video should be between 3 and 5 minutes. The subject can be anything that illustrates the joy and excitement of amateur radio.

Entries should be sent on a CD or DVD. Don't attempt to e-mail it. Send your video to: Amateur Radio Video Competition, P O Box 90438, Garsfontein, 0042. The closing date is 31 December 2013. Entries post stamped 31 December will be accepted till 15 January. The winners will be announced early in 2014. More details on www.amateurradio.org.za

LEAGUE NEWS

CALL FOR PAPERS AT THE 2014 RTA

The SARL has started planning for the 2014 RTA to be held all main centres starting in July next year. This is a call for papers to be presented at the RTA or to be included in the Symposium CD. If you have a subject that you would like to present at all RTA's or just at your local one, please send a synopsis by not later than today, 15 December 2013, to rta@sarl.org.za. Please include your contact details.

The dates for the 2014 RTA are now available on the SARL web.

NOMINATION OF COUNCILLORS

Members and clubs are reminded that the SARL is awaiting the nomination of

councillors. Members can be nominated by clubs or by individual members. The rules and conditions are set out in the SARL constitution and rules as published on the website. The closing date for nominations is 31 January 2014. To simplify nomination an informal nomination form can be obtained by emailing the secretary at secretary@sarl.org.za. The form is not essential, it is only for convenience.

CLUB NEWS

You are invited to tune in to the Magalies Radio Amateur Clubs news and Christmas bulletin today at 11:15.

Frekwensies wat in gebruik sal wees is op 2 m 145,750 MHz, 20 m 14,250 MHz and on 40 meter 7,062 MHz.

Information about the 2014 SARL Convention will be shared regularly until the event.

Start getting your planning in place soon for this event. MRC is looking forward to meet you at the Furrowlane Hotel, Equestria, Pretoria.

HF PROPAGATION REPORT

Hannes Coetzee, ZS6BZP, reports that the solar activity is at moderate levels. Sunspot AR1918 has a “beta-gamma” magnetic field that harbors enough energy for M-class flares.

If you want to do your own frequency predictions, the expected effective sunspot number for the week will be around 105.

All the bands from 20 to 10 m will provide lots of DX fun with 15 m providing the best openings with 20 m not far behind. There may even be some 6 m openings during the early evenings.

Please visit the website spaceweather.sansa.org.za for further information.

DIARY OF EVENTS

31 December - Last day to submit amateur radio video 18 January 2014
SARL@Home 28 February 2014 - Closing date for Youth Essay Competition.

SARL News invites clubs and individuals to submit news items of interest to radio amateurs and short-wave listeners. Submit news items - if possible in both English and Afrikaans to www.sarl.org.za/newsinbox.asp, not later than the Thursday preceding the bulletin date.

The SARL invites you to listen to Amateur Radio Today every Sunday morning at 10:00 CAT on 145,750 MHz in the Pretoria area, with relays on 7 082, 7 205, and 17 760 kHz. There is also a podcast by ZS6RO. For a web-stream and Echolink by ZS6FCS, visit www.sarl.org.za, click on ‘Amateur Radio Today’, go down the green column and click on ‘LISTEN ON THE WEB’. A repeat transmission can be heard on Mondays at 16:30 UTC on 4 895 kHz. The website also lists various other retransmissions. Reception reports, comments

and suggestions are invited. Send an email to artoday@sarl.org.za. Sentechn sponsors the transmissions on the non-amateur frequencies.

You have listened to a bulletin of the South African Radio League compiled and edited by Louis Kirstein, ZS1LK.

Thank you for listening, 73.

/EX